



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Karen Haver, Executive Director
610-898-1930; FAX: 610-898-1932

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Berks Arts Council Announces the Recipient of the 2014 Pagoda Awards

Pagoda Award and special concert to be held June 9, 2014 at Building 24 Live, 115 Bern Road; Wyomissing.

Reading - Berks Arts Council will honor Berks County resident John Ernesto with the 2014 Pagoda Award for Community Leadership and Commitment at 7:00 p.m., Monday, June 9, Building 24 Live. The presentation will include the inaugural "John Ernesto Volunteer Recognition Award." The Volunteer Recognition Award will be awarded to two long time Berks Arts Council and Berks Jazz Fest volunteers Mark Burford and Pauline Heckman will be recognized for their dedication and service.

The first Pagoda Award was presented to the late Gertrude Sternbergh in 1993 in recognition of her valuable contribution to the arts in Berks County. Over the past twenty years, the awards were expanded to include multiple recipients celebrating contributions to the arts through excellence, patronage and leadership. Over 30 individuals have been presented since the award's inception.

John Ernesto has shown his commitment to the arts in our community through his support of a variety of arts organizations including The Reading Pops, Reading Musical Foundation and the Berks Jazz Fest and the Berks Jazz Fest "Get JazzED" educational program. Through his work with Reading Eagle, Ernesto worked with many arts organizations throughout the region. Ernesto has been involved with Berks Jazz Fest since its inception and served as General Manager since 1995. Under his leadership the festival grew from a 3-day festival to the 10-day, internationally renowned fest we see today; 2015 marks the 25th annual Boscov's Berks Jazz Fest, April 10-19.

The Awards Ceremony will include a special performance to honor Ernesto. Berks Jazz Fest favorites Rick Braun, Gerald Veasley, Chuck Loeb and Brian Bromberg will be playing a very special concert to celebrate the work that John has done. The 2014 Pagoda Awards will also serve as a kick-off fundraising event for the 25th anniversary Berks Jazz Fest.

The Pagoda Awards and special concert will be presented on Monday, June 9 at Building 24 Live. Tickets for the Award Ceremony concert are \$50 and are available through Berks Arts Council. For more information, please contact the Berks Arts Council at 610-898-1930.

The mission of Berks Arts Council, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is to cultivate, promote, and support the arts in our community through collaboration, education, and presentation.

Berks Arts Council presents the Boscov's Berks Jazz Fest, the Bandshell Concert Series, Hidden River Film Initiative, Fast Lane Art and the Pagoda Awards. The Council administers the Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts Re-Granting Program, which provides funding to local arts projects and programs, and provides art exhibition and marketing opportunities for member artists. Visit them at www.berksarts.org. Berks Arts Council receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

